

**Attendance:**

Ben Buchan, GDOT Urban Design	Douglas Dewberry, SSBA	JOHNSON FERRY/ABERNATHY ROAD
Joe Palladi, GDOT, Planning Administrator	Roger Blichfeldt, Sandy Springs Revitalization	CAC MEETING MINUTES JUNE 24, 2003 CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Angela Alexander, GDOT, Urban Design	Yvonne Williams, Perimeter CID	
Darrell Richardson, GDOT Urban Design	Jerrie Woodward, Abernathy HOA	
Albert Shelby, GDOT, Urban Design	Dan Dobry, Cobb County DOT	
Tom Kelly, Abernathy Road Coalition	Lisa Hrabe, Riverside HOA	
Ernest Slaughter, Fulton County Public Works	John Cheek, for Gar Muse Sandy Springs Revitalization	
Lynn Watson, Abernathy Road Coalition	Joe Gavalis, Cobb County	
Ralph Daniels, Fulton County (Office of Tom Lowe)	John Dalton, representing Robert Trusty, Sandy Springs Christian Church	
David Hong, Cobb County (Commissioner Sam Olens)	Antonio Valenzuela, Fulton County Public Works	
George Smith, Sandy Springs Council of Neighborhoods	Mel Mobley, Sandy Springs Revitalization	
Tom Williams, Mountain Springs/Rivershore Estates	Kevin G. Cheri, NPS Chattahoochee River NRA	
Ed Dolan, Abernathy Road Coalition	Bill Snarr, Cobb County	

**Mr. Joe Palladi**, State Planning Administrator, (GDOT), welcomed the CAC members and asked that all comments, questions or concerns be limited to the CAC members. He informed them that GDOT was here to review the preferred alternative that would be taken into the environmental process as well as further explain some of the State and Federal guidelines the Department must follow.

He discussed the numerous comments that have been received. He also reminded the committee that while in the past we have taken votes, that those votes are a recommendation and not “whoever gets the most votes wins”.

**Mr. Palladi** asked if there were any questions then turned the floor over to Mrs. **Angela Alexander**, Assistant State Urban Design Engineer, (GDOT) who would be the facilitator for the meeting.

**Mrs. Alexander** then briefly reviewed the following:

- For various reasons, JJ & G’s services are no longer needed for the design project. They are still involved in the green way design as the consultant for Fulton County.
- **Mr. Palladi** has moved to the Office of Planning. The new State Urban Design Engineer is **Mr. Ben Buchan**.
- the members of the CAC were asked to identify themselves and state which group he or she represented. A total of 21 CAC members were present.
- the minutes from the February 11, 2003 and March 11, 2003 meetings were discussed and approved, with the amendments **Mr. Kelly** asked be incorporated as a matter of record.

**Mr. Ernest Slaughter** of Fulton County Public Works then briefly reviewed the alternates for the green space:

- **Concept 1:** the greenway would encompass the northern side of Abernathy Rd. The median would be wide enough to provide ample room for landscaping.

- **Concept 2:** the greenway would include a narrower median than Concept 1 but again would encompass the northern side. This would provide a wider buffer between the roadway and the remaining homes.
- **Concept 3:** the greenway would include the widest median of the three concepts similar to the shape of a football. The roadway would be located on the outside of the greenway. Multiple use paths would be included outside the right of way on each side.

Other statements made by **Mr. Slaughter**:

- The County would like feedback from the CAC/community to direct the greenway concept.
- Funding will be addressed and should not be the driving issue at this time.
- The County is willing to have a meeting with the CAC to further define the greenway concepts.

**Mr. Slaughter** then opened the floor to comments, concerns and questions.

**Ralph Daniels**, of Commissioner Tom Lowe's office, clarified that land in the Sandy Springs Village area would not be acquired, but the property behind Sandy Springs Village would. **Mr. Slaughter** confirmed that this was correct.

Other statements by **Mr. Daniels**:

- If a wide median is used, than the buffer to the neighborhoods on both sides of the roadway would be less. That would have to be a compromise the neighborhood would have to make.
- The CAC and GDOT will decide what side street connections will be incorporated and not Fulton County.
- There are 4 million dollars from Cobb County identified for this project. Congressman Issakson will help identify any additional funding if required.

There was a lot of discussion regarding the coordination of the roadway and the green space. The committee was reminded that the County and Department are committed to working together to develop concepts that will work together. There are still several unknowns such as topography and environmental issues that will have to be further examined. They were also reminded that until the environmental process is complete, the roadway alignments can not be finalized.

A question was asked about the costs of the greenway. **Mr. Daniels** stated that without a final plan no one could estimate the costs.

The question of a public meeting to present potential greenway designs to the public was posed. Since there are still several unknowns (environmental, R/W appraisals, etc.) it was decided this may not be prudent.

A motion was made and passed to have a CAC workshop instead to further discuss/define the green space concepts. This workshop would be held by Fulton County and would include the CAC, a GDOT representative and the County's consultant. Although this would not be a public information meeting, as with all CAC meetings, it would not restrict the public from observing. Discussion followed regarding the time of the meeting and the consensus by vote of 10 to 8 was to hold the meeting in the evening as opposed to the morning hours. The meeting was scheduled for 6 pm on July 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Mr. Kelly** requested that a contour map, alignment, cross-sections and topography map be provided to Fulton County's consultant prior to the workshop. **Albert Shelby** stated he could get that to the consultant.

Although the concern for narrowing this process was large, it was determined that the concept could move forward with continued coordination with the green space.

DRAFT FOR REVIEW AND COMMENTS

JOHNSON FERRY/ABERNATHY ROAD

CAC MEETING MINUTES

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**Mr. Albert Shelby** then gave a summary and statistics of the statements received at the March 25<sup>th</sup> P.I.M. He also explained how they were tallied.

**Mr. Harvey Keepler** then discussed the *NEPA* (National Environmental Policy Act) process. **Mr. Keepler** explained the many processes involved in collecting data and what was involved in the actual studies. He also stated that this project was in the early phase of the environmental process where data is still being gathered and additional studies still have to take place. **Mr. Mobley** asked for more information and was directed to the FHWA website as a good source for additional detailed information. That website is: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/nepa/nepa.htm>.

**Mr. Joe Gavalis** asked when the environmental study would be complete. **Mr. Keepler** said that under a “best scenario” it would be late 2004.

Additional areas of discussion with **Mr. Keepler** included:

- listing properties identified as historical on the website
- does the property owner have to acknowledge/accept his property being a historic resource?
- how will the property be mitigated at the Chattahoochee River?
- can the community assist efforts and be consulted in the study?

**Mr. Keepler** reminded the committee that until the studies were complete, the information would not be publicly available. Once the Draft Environmental Document is approved by FHWA it can be reviewed by the public. Also, the best way for them to assist the study is through the Public Involvement process.

**Mr. Slaughter** offered a watershed study of the road to assist **Mr. Keepler’s** office when collecting data.

**Mr. Kelly** inquired how all of this would affect the green space. **Mr. Richardson** stated that the Department’s plan of order was to avoid, minimize or mitigate identified environmental impacts when designing a final alignment. Until all impacts are identified his question could not be fully addressed.

**Mr. Shelby** then reviewed changes that had been made to the concept since the March Public Information Meeting:

- **Change 1:** Proposed full median opening @ Abernathy Square/Lucent
- **Change 2:** Proposed a 6-Lane configuration at the Roswell/Abernathy Intersection
- **Change 3:** Proposed a median opening @ Sandy Springs Crossing
- **Change 4:** Two options will be carried through the environmental process at the Abernathy/Wright Rd. intersection. They are:
  - The Magnolia Option: Wright Rd.-full access option and
  - The Dogwood Option: Wright Rd.-cul-de-sac

The following comments, concerns and questions were discussed:

- **Change 1:** Would the median opening be signalized? Was the Department aware of a future school in the area? **Mr. Shelby** said the Department was aware of the future school and that a warrant study is ongoing to determine if a signal will be included at this location.

- Change 2:** What was the purpose of the additional lanes? Have the owners of the property at that intersection been informed? **Mr. Palladi** said that the additional lane was added because of a future project in the RTP and that the Department wants to acquire land once, if possible. The owners have been contacted but the Department has not heard back from them.
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- **Change 3:** Could there be U-Turn provisions made? This will greatly affect the owners of the businesses at the intersection. **Mrs. Alexander** said the property owners were aware of the change and that there were U-turn provisions
- **Change 4:** **Ms. Watson** asked if a traffic signal could be added. **Mr. Shelby** said this intersection is included in the warrant study that is underway to determine signal locations.
- **Change 5:** **Mr. Mobley** showed documentation and gave statistics he felt justified a cul-de-sac at Wright Rd. **Mr. Kelly** also voiced his concerns about emergency vehicle access onto Wright Rd.

**Ms. Alexander** reminded the CAC that both options will be studied further as part of the environmental process prior to making any final determinations.

**Mr. Williams** expressed comments and concerns from the neighborhood that will be affected by the proposed realignment. The concerns were primarily about restrictions to ingress/egress from Johnson Ferry Road to Burdett Drive. **Ms. Alexander** stated that his concerns were heard and will be incorporated where feasible, however, there are requirements and guidelines that control the design and must be met.

**Ms. Watson** asked if Brandon Mill Road could be realigned so that the large trees on the corner may be saved. **Mr. Shelby** responded that the trees will be located and identified in the plans, and that where feasible, will be avoided.

Additional changes to the display included a new bike/pedestrian trail under the bridge and a decorative railing for the bridge.

**Mr. Bill Snarr** wanted to go on record that **Mr. Cheri's** efforts should be applauded and that he be given the utmost respect for what he has done and is doing for the park.

**Mrs. Alexander** gave closing comments and noted that the meeting minutes will be posted on the website within the next two weeks.

**Mr. Tom Williams** asked if 11"x17" color drawings of the green space designs would be made available to hand-out to the public. **Ms. Alexander** stated that the Department would try to get the CAC copies of the displays. *Note: electronic copies were e-mailed to the committee on 7/3/03.*

**Mr. Palladi** thanked the CAC for their participation and cooperation throughout the course of this project and asked that they give **Mr. Ben Buchan** the same cooperation.

The meeting was adjourned.